

Using Records Retention Schedules: Local Government Preliminary Drafts (DAN GS50-02-05)

Purpose: Provide guidance to local government agencies on implementing DAN GS50-02-05 in the *Local Government Common Records Retention Schedule (CORE)* with respect to preliminary drafts and what constitutes “significant basic steps”.

Local government agencies are responsible for determining the appropriate records series to use for their public records.

DAN GS50-02-05 applies to preliminary drafts which do not represent significant basic steps.

Examples of preliminary drafts that typically do not constitute “significant basic steps” are those that:

- Correct spelling and/or grammar;
- Represent minor changes which do not change intent/policies (“word-smithing”);
- Are used as part of routine internal agency consultation.

Examples of preliminary drafts that typically do constitute “significant basic steps” are those that:

- Alter policy decisions of the agency;
- Are used as part of consultation outside the agency;
- Are reviewed and/or edited by the agency’s legal staff.

Factors local government agencies need to consider when using DAN GS50-02-05 to schedule preliminary drafts include the:

- Significance of the document being drafted;
- Specific legal requirements relating to the retention of certain preliminary drafts;
- Sensitivity or risk associated with the subject of the preliminary drafts;
- Need for records as evidence that the agency practiced due diligence in the drafting process.

Agencies seeking advice on public disclosure of preliminary drafts should consult RCW 42.56.280, their own agency’s legal counsel, or the Office of the Attorney General, Open Government Ombuds, at: <http://www.atg.wa.gov/OpenGovernment/Ombudsman.aspx>

**Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available from
Washington State Archives:**

**www.sos.wa.gov/archives
recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov**